years = winter.] The snow is now becoming a little softer and out-of-door life is more possible. The festivities are kept up for twelve days. Visits take place and man and wife are invited out to dinner during that period. Formerly, when the Shins had a Raja or Nawab of their own, it used to be the custom for women to dance during those twelve days. Now the advent of the Sepoys and the ridiculous pseudo-morality of the Kashmir rule have introduced a kind of Pardah and the chaste Shin women do not like to expose themselves to the strangers. Then there is the Nauraz, which is celebrated for three, and sometimes for six, days.

There are now five great holidays in the year:

The Id of Ramazan.
The Shina-Shin.
The Nauraz.
Kurbani Id.
The Kiu Shin,* } Astor.
Dismikal, } Gilgit.

On the last-named holiday the game of Polo is played, good clothes are put on, and men and women amuse themselves at public meetings.

The Shin people are very patriotic. Since the Maharaja's rule many of their old customs have died out, and the separation of the sexes is becoming greater. Their great national festival I have already described under the head of "Historical Legend of Gilgit" (pages 14 to 16).

6. THE RELIGIOUS CREED OF THE DARDS.

If the Dards—the races living between the Hindu-Kush and Kaghán—have preserved many Aryan customs and traditions, it is partly because they have lived in almost perfect seclusion from other Mohammedans. In Chilás, where the Sunni form of that faith prevails, there is little to relieve the monotony of that creed. The men of the Mohammedan Dards are Shiahs, and that belief is more classic and seems to be more suited to a quick-witted race, than the orthodox form of Islam. Sunnism, however, is

* In celebrating its festivals when the fruit and corn have become ripe. For a detailed account of this and other festivals see "Dialect Dogar Khuh Gesh," and Parts II. and III. of the "Languages and Races of Dardistan."

A Dharat G-4 (1888-92) 1930 Art Kashmir Art
Dard Art

What could be done with troops so trusted? The men were well enough, and, poor wretches, looked eagerly to my coming to relieve them of their misery. Some of the officers were keen, but peculation and corruption were rampant; the honest men, if they existed, had no chance, and the condition of the force was deplorable.

If from the military point of view things were bad, from the civil they were no better. The Durbar was robbed by every official from the highest to the lowest; granaries that should have been full of good grain were empty, or full of rubbish substituted for a consideration, bribery and corruption ruled the land, disloyalty and treachery were in its high places. The man to send warning to the Hunza-Nagar forces, when after the capture of Chaprot they had advanced south and were besieging Nomal, the last Kashmir fort between them and Gilgit, of the advance of the Kashmir troops to its relief, was the Governor of Gilgit's right-hand man, Wazir Ghulam Haidar. Every one knew this, yet he was still employed and passed backwards and forwards between both sides, apparently the trusted servant of the Governor. A more villainous-looking scoundrel I never saw. He came one day, bringing the sons of the Raja of Nagar, who had come as ambassadors from their father, to see me. One of them had some years before been made Rá or Chief of Gilgit by the Durbar, the old line of chiefs having died out, and he having married the last surviving girl belonging to it. He had distinguished himself by holding from Gilgit and beating the attack of the Nagar forces on Chaprot some months before. I thought

Durand G-6 (1888-89) 1900 AVI Kashmir AVI
AVI
Gurais AVI

this rather ungrateful at the time, till I found that, with the Governor's connivance, Wazir Ghulam Haidar had previously seized his best house and lands. It was double-dealing of this kind which had brought on the trouble for the Durbar, a mixture of weakness and bullying, fear and swagger, which had half-frightened and half-exasperated the tribesmen into attack. There was also a Helen in the case.

A fortnight at Gilgit put me in full possession of the leading facts bearing on the existing difficulties, which may be summarised as follows:—Hunza was extremely difficult of attack, and practically could have but little pressure brought to bear on it, having exits to the north on to the Pamirs. It could get all its luxuries from Kashgar and Yarkand, and had some connection with China; an Amban being at the time I was in Gilgit, or shortly before, in Hunza, to enquire as to the cause of the trouble. He was plundered and practically sent naked away, but that is another story. Nagar being a *cul-de-sac*, and depending for its salt and other luxuries on Gilgit, could be squeezed, and was, moreover, supposed to be easier of access. The Durbar, while jealous of its military reputation, and ostensibly making great preparations for war, really wished to avoid fighting, and was anxious to arrive at peace by any means in its power. The Committee at Gilgit fully recognised the difficulties of supply and carriage, and were also most anxious to come to some conclusion. The Hunza-Nagar people were sick of the game, and wanted to make peace, so that the men might look after the crops instead of spending the

4c Durand G-9 (1888-92) 1900 AVI Kashmir
Dard Ags
Chitral

We continued at Mastuj about a week to get our
Mehtar time to make his preparations for receiving 649
me, to get a little shooting, and to rest our camp. 662
Afzul also was most pressing for us to stay, thinking
that every day he spent with me was another nail in
Nizam's coffin, another step towards getting the
Government of India to recognise him, and not his
elder brother, as heir-apparent. Needless to say,
Government had not the remotest intention of inter-
fering in any way in the matter.

We beguiled the time during our enforced illness 133
by moving up the valley and visiting the Chamarkand.
This pass leads into the valley we had come by above
Chitral. I had originally meant to use it, but did
not owing to the weather: it is in some ways more
difficult than the Shandur. The road leading into it
from the Mastuj valley winds through a narrow gorge
cut through clay, the sides being carved out by water
action into the wildest collection of pinnacles and
ravines imaginable, with numerous balanced rocks.
We came out very light, and I left my peraggal 000
servants behind. The consequence was that my
orderlies put up my camp bed, an English "paragon,"
without fitting the joints properly, and it smashed
irretrievably directly I sat on it. For the next two
months I slept on the ground, and in cold weather,
when there are no centipedes about, or other horrors,
there is no doubt that it is far the most comfortable
arrangement, and very much warmer than a bed.
My orderlies used to get a lot of *khoosa*, the broken
straw from the threshing floors, and put a foot of it
down all over the floor of the tent, stretch my tent
carpet over this, and put down the bedding on the
top of all. In real cold this makes the most perfect

4c Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard Av3
Chitral

were told of its wonders, how it could turn out fourteen lakhs of rupees a day—a lakh is a hundred thousand—how it coined every day in the year without cessation. The Kashmir officer with us, with what object it was not necessary to enquire (every man in his position must intrigue, and has an axe of his own to grind), capped these stories by informing the Chitralis that our rulers never were at a loss for the white metal, as we could turn copper into silver.

Altogether I soon saw that my prospects of satisfying everybody, or for the matter of that, anybody, were remote. My difficulties would have been much lightened in Chitral had Nizam and Afzul gone through, during their visit to India, a course of sight-seeing at some big military centre. Twenty thousand men on parade, "horse, foot, and dragoons," would have given them and their headmen a much more intelligent appreciation of what the power of the Government of India meant than could wandering about cotton and jute mills, or being driven through foul and crowded bazaars.

Between Mastuj and Chitral we found at Sanoghar, Buni, and other places, miles of splendid cultivation, and we saw above us, on the right bank of the river, the extensive fields of the Murikho valley. But for the most part the road was, as before, extremely difficult; the last couple of marches it was purposely left in the worst condition, running through gorges and along cliffs on rickety brackets which could be destroyed in a moment.

Glacial action is again well marked below Mastuj, the road running over huge masses of rock, rounded,

4: Durand G-3 (1888-92) 1900 AVJ Kashmir
Dur: 6 AVJ
Chitral

willow shaded off into the dark red of the rose thickets.

On our way down we branched off to try and get some shooting. We got none, but were amply repaid by the magnificent scenery. We camped one night at an altitude of about twelve thousand feet on a hillside so steep that our small tent could only be pitched by raising one pole on a pile of stones, and our bed places had to be similarly built up. We here got an insight into the reckless way the Chitralis destroy their timber. Some of our hosts' followers were belated, and in order to attract their attention, the men with us calmly fired a patch of forest. The next morning we rode up and crossed the shoulder of the range we were on at a height of sixteen thousand feet. I was pretty well accustomed by then to riding over anything, but we crossed ground that day that a few months before I should have considered impossible for a horse—long, sloping stretches of shaley rock across which our horses picked their way in the most extraordinary manner. The view from the top was grand: right opposite us, with only one range of lower mountains in between, rose Tirich Mir, twenty-five thousand feet high; no cloud obscured the view, and so close did we seem that every turn of the glaciers could be traced, and the lines of the avalanches distinctly seen.

The Mehtar came out to see me at Shoghot, and we spent another day together. With him was his son-in-law Rahat Mian, a Kaka-Kheyl timber merchant from within our borders, and at the moment the most important man in Chitral, as the Mehtar trusted almost implicitly in his advice. Our Native

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Agrut in Chitral also came, and had a long talk to me
• 6.62. in the morning, during which he inveighed against Rahat Mian, and unfolded his many villainies. Rahat Mian was a study, an old man with a very shrewd face, and an expression entirely under control. He used to sit during my long talks with the Mehtar with a pomegranate in his hand, cutting out all sorts of fantastic geometrical patterns in the rind with a sharp penknife, watching everybody out of the corner of his eye and never losing a word. He produced a letter from Mahomed Ishák, which he said the Mehtar had intercepted, and our Agent praised his loyalty and devotion to Government, and begged that I would bring his services to notice, he having told me all about the letter an hour before, and how copies had been sent post haste weeks ago to their destination. It was interesting to watch the two who hated each other with a deadly hatred, each knowing the other was lying, and both profuse in their compliments and expressions of affection.

641 Diplomacy in the Hindu-Kush is an interesting game to watch; the men intrigue from their cradle; it is an amusement as well as the business of life. For an Englishman the only safe course is the honest one; he must think pretty carefully before he speaks, and then speak plainly. Every word must prove true, every promise must be fulfilled to the letter; following on these lines a man in the end will get the influence he wants. At first the native diplomatist will not believe him, and will search for hidden meanings, but in the end he will have confidence in this strange being who plays the game on such hitherto unheard-of lines. But the Englishman who believes

of learning all the changes in Chitral politics that had taken place during the preceding year. I found that Afzul-ul-Mulk had made considerable progress, and had detached some of his brother's most trusted adherents. The proposed return to India *viâ* Dir and Bajour was discussed with care, and the general opinion was that I could go down in safety if Umra Khan invited me. Both the Khan of Dir and the Khan of Aladand, the last men through whose hands I should have to pass, were said to be most anxious to arrange my passage, but all depended on the Napoleon of Bajour.

Afzul accompanied me on my way to Chitral, and Nizam-ul-Mulk met me half-way there. The brothers, after the first formal meeting, carefully kept out of each other's way, their followers glowered at each other and kept their swords home in their scabbards. Prince Hal, as we christened Nizam, was the same as ever, in manner and looks infinitely superior to his brother; but feckless as to the future, he was busily throwing away his chances of succession to the throne.

He came to see me after dinner one night and nearly finished his earthly career. We offered him tea, but he voted for something stronger, and we brought out one of our last bottles of champagne. He had never tasted it, and to my surprise was quite delighted with it. Unfortunately, accustomed though he had become to spirits, he was not proof against the sparkling wine, and a couple of glasses got into his head. Towards the end of the interview he looked extremely handsome, had a good colour, and was just sufficiently elevated to be on the best of terms with

to all, and to enjoy himself thoroughly, while at the same time he knew perfectly well what he wanted to say, and said it in the confidential, good-humoured drunken man's way. But the return to his own tents was the serious thing: he did not mind his own men seeing him happy, but did not like Afzul's doing so, and he sat on till near midnight. Then, with protestations of eternal friendship and appreciative remarks as to the efficacy of the Dagmut, he wandered solemnly off, one arm round our Agent's neck, the other round his foster-brother's.

Poor Prince Hal. I was always sorry for him; it was so evident that he was playing a losing game and did not realise it, and if to his other vices he was going to add drink, it did not require a prophet to foresee the end. Afzul's private interview followed next evening, and I heard before he came that the little savage had been furious at his brother's visit the night before. He persuaded himself that I was promising to recognise his brother on the part of Government as the heir, and only the strongest dissuasion on the part of his principal adherents prevented his attacking and murdering Nizam as he passed from my tents to his own. We should have been in a pleasant predicament had he done so. After our interview we went and sat round a camp fire and watched Afzul's boys, and afterwards our Balti coolies, dancing. The latter were most grotesque and uncouth in their movements. The entertainment was diversified by a well-acted pantomime, representing the attack and murder of a party of Pathans by Kafirs, the comic element being